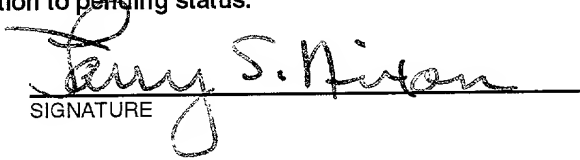


FORM PTO-1390 (REV 11-98)	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 36-1338
TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US) CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371		U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.5) 09/530785 Unknown
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/GB98/03501	INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE 24 November 1998	PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED 4 December 1997 & 30 March 1998
TITLE OF INVENTION COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK		
APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US BEDDUS et al		
Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:		
<p>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This is a FIRST submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.</p> <p>2. <input type="checkbox"/> This is a SECOND or SUBSEQUENT submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.</p> <p>3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1)</p> <p>4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.</p> <p>5. A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).</p> <p>6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau). <input type="checkbox"/> has been transmitted by the International Bureau. <input type="checkbox"/> is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US)</p> <p>7. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).</p> <p>8. <input type="checkbox"/> Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).</p> <p>9. <input type="checkbox"/> are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau) <input type="checkbox"/> have been transmitted by the International Bureau. <input type="checkbox"/> have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired. <input type="checkbox"/> have not been made and will not be made.</p> <p>10. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).</p> <p>11. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).</p> <p>12. <input type="checkbox"/> A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).</p>		
Items 11. To 16. Below concern document(s) or information included:		
<p>11. <input type="checkbox"/> An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and 1.98.</p> <p>12. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 C.F.R. 3.28 and 3.31 is included.</p> <p>13. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A FIRST preliminary amendment. <input type="checkbox"/> A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.</p> <p>14. <input type="checkbox"/> A substitute specification.</p> <p>15. <input type="checkbox"/> A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.</p> <p>16. <input type="checkbox"/> Other items or information.</p>		

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.51) 09/530785		INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/GB98/03501		ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 36-1338	
17. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted.				CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY	
BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 C.F.R. 1.492(a)(1)-(5): -- Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 C.F.R. 1.482) nor international search fee (37 C.F.R. 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO... \$970.00 -- International preliminary examination fee (37 C.F.R. 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO. \$840.00 -- International preliminary examination fee (37 C.F.R. 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 C.F.R. 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO. \$690.00 -- International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 C.F.R. 1.482) but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) ... \$670.00 -- International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 C.F.R. 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) ... \$96.00 <div style="text-align: right;">ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =</div>				<div style="text-align: right;">\$ 840.00</div>	
Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 C.F.R. 1.492(e)).				<div style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</div>	
CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE		
Total Claims	8	-20 =	0	X	\$18.00
Independent Claims	2	-3 =	0	X	\$78.00
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIMS(S) (if applicable)					\$260.00
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =					\$ 840.00
Reduction by 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. A Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 C.F.R. 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).					0.00
SUBTOTAL =					\$ 840.00
Processing fee of \$130.00, for furnishing the English Translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 C.F.R. 1.492(f)).					0.00
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =					\$ 840.00
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 C.F.R. 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 C.F.R. 3.28, 3.31) \$40.00 per property					40.00
Fee for Petition to Revive Unintentionally Abandoned Application (\$1210.00 - Small Entity = \$605.00)					0.00
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =					\$ 880.00
				Amount to be:	
				refunded	\$
				Charged	\$
a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of \$880.00 to cover the above fees is enclosed. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my Deposit Account No. 14-1140 in the amount of \$_____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this form is enclosed. c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 14-1140. A duplicate copy of this form is enclosed. d. <input type="checkbox"/> The entire content of the foreign application(s), referred to in this application is/are hereby incorporated by reference in this application. NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 C.F.R. 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 C.F.R. 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.					
SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: NIXON & VANDERHYTE P.C. 1100 North Glebe Road, 8 th Floor Arlington, Virginia 22201 Telephone: (703) 816-4000					
				 SIGNATURE	
				Larry S. Nixon NAME	
				25,640 REGISTRATION NUMBER	
				May 5, 2000 Date	

526 Rec'd PCT/PTO 05 MAY 2000

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Atty. Ref.: **36-1338**

Group:

Serial No. **Unknown**

Examiner:

Examiner:

* * * * *

May 5, 2000

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to calculation of the filing fee and in order to place the above identified application in better condition for examination, please amend the claims as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 3, line 1, delete "or 2".

Claims 4 and 6, line 1 of each, delete "any one of the preceding claims" and insert -- claim 1 --.

REMARKS

The above amendments are made to place the claims in a more traditional format.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHUYE P.C.

By:

Larry S. Nixon

Reg. No. 25,640

LSN:Imy

1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor
Arlington, VA 22201-4714
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100

8/PR+5

09/530785
526 Rec'd PCT/PTO 05 MAY 2000

COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a communications system, and in particular to a heterogeneous system employing a number of different call control mechanisms and different address types.

In a conventional, homogeneous, communications network, such as the public switched telephony network (PSTN), customers have only one type of address (in this case their telephone number) and there is a single uniform call control mechanism which is built into the network. The call control mechanism is used for establishing and for terminating calls and for recognising, e.g., when a called party is busy. Increasingly, however, customers have access to a range of different network technologies, each with its own address type. For example, a customer might have in addition to a telephone number a conventional IP (Internet protocol) address, a multicast IP address and a URL (uniform resource locator). In general, each of these different address types has associated with it a respective call control protocol (where the term "call control" is used broadly to denote the means for establishing and terminating connections between different parties. For example, audio or visual communication between parties using conventional IP addresses commonly uses the H.323 protocol, whereas for communication between broadband ATM addresses a different protocol, B-ISDN (broadband-integrated services digital network), is used. In practice, the call control protocol which is used for a particular communication session tends to be determined by the party who initiates the session. If other parties later join a session, they are then restricted to using the addressing and call control capabilities determined by the initiating party.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a method of operating a communications systems comprising:

- (a) exchanging between communication terminals call control capability data, which call control capability data identifies for each respective terminal a selected one or more of a plurality of different call control protocols and different network addresses and;

(b) setting up a call between the said communications terminals using call control protocols or network addresses identified in the said call control capability data.

The present invention makes it possible to use fully the capabilities of
 5 terminals in a heterogeneous communications system by providing for peer
 terminals to exchange data which identifies their call control and address types.
 This approach allows the full potential of a heterogeneous communications system
 to be realised, since the use of this mechanism makes it unnecessary for users to
 adopt the "lowest common denominator" in addressing and call control types.
 10 This serves to encourage the use of advanced call control and addressing
 mechanisms offering greater flexibility, even if initially those advanced call control
 and addressing mechanisms are used only by a minority of terminals in the
 communications system.

Preferably the step of exchanging call control capability data is carried out
 15 prior to initiating call set-up.

The exchange of data might be integrated with the call set-up process,
 forming the initial part of that process. However, for maximum flexibility, it is
 preferred that the exchange is carried out independently prior to call set-up. The
 user might then choose not to proceed with set-up depending upon the capabilities
 20 of the or each other terminal.

Preferably a first terminal initiates the exchange of call control capability
 data by transmitting the call control capability data for the first terminal to a
 second terminal and the second terminal returns an acknowledgement to the
 request, which acknowledgement includes call control capability data for the
 25 second terminal.

It is found to be particularly effective to implement the exchange of data
 interactively, using a simple request/response.

Preferably the method includes monitoring continuously at a
 communications terminal a communications port and carrying out the exchange of
 30 call control capability data whenever a request is received at the said port.
 Preferably the said step of monitoring continues after a call has been set up.

The preferred implementation further enhances the flexibility of the
 communications system, by allowing the exchange of capability data to be carried
 out at any time. This makes it possible for the system to respond, for example, to

the arrival of a new member with new communication capabilities in a multi-party communications session, or to respond to a change in the capabilities of one of the parties in an on-going session.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a
5 communications terminal including:

(a) means for exchanging call control capability data with other communications terminals, which call control capability data identifies for respective terminal a selected one or more of a plurality of different call control protocols and different network addresses; and

10 (b) means for setting up a call between the said communications terminal and the other communications terminal using a call control protocol or network address type identified in the call control capability data received from the said other communications terminal.

The invention also encompasses a communications system including
15 communications terminal in accordance with the second aspect of the invention.

Methods and systems embodying the present invention will now be described in further detail, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figures 1 is a schematic of a first network embodying the present
20 invention;

Figure 2 illustrates the exchange of capability data;

Figures 3a and 3b illustrate protocol stacks for systems embodying the invention;

Figures 4a and 4b show message flow sequences in systems embodying
25 the invention;

Figures 5 and 6 are diagrams showing software objects implementing the invention;

Figure 8 is a second embodiment; and

Figure 9 shows message flows in the networks of Figure 8.

30 A communications system 1 includes user terminals 2, 3 connected to different respective network domains 4, 5. In this example, the user terminals 2, 3 are computer workstations. The network domains in this example are broadband networks which support both ATM (asynchronous transfer modes) and IP (Internet protocol) transmission protocols. The user terminal has both a user address

(111.111.1.113) and an ATM address (ATM1). Similarly, the second user terminal has an Internet address (123.123.1.124) and an ATM address (ATM2). The network domains are linked by a connection 6 which also supports both of these protocols. Each of the terminals 2, 3 stores a respective client capability object
 5 which records the address types and call control types which the terminal is capable of handling. The client objects in the different terminals communicate with each other using a predetermined communication protocol (in the present example Internet protocol). The exchange of address and call control capabilities between two clients is carried out independently of the call or calls in progress
 10 between a session.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the exchange mechanism is initiated when a TRANSFER.request primitive is issued by the user of the outgoing client. The TRANSFER.request from the initiating client includes the client capabilities set for the corresponding terminal. This client capability set indicates all the call control
 15 technologies and addresses supported by the terminal. The user of the incoming client is notified of the request for the exchange of client capability data by a TRANSFER.indication primitive. The user of the incoming client then initiates transfer of its capabilities using the TRANSFER.response primitive. The capabilities of the incoming terminal, that is the terminal which receives the incoming client
 20 capability exchange request, are sent back to the originating terminal using a client capability set acknowledge message. The user of the originating client is notified that the exchange of capability data has taken place by a TRANSFER.confirm primitive.

The client capability set data in the message as described above identify
 25 which of a number of predetermined address types and call control types are supported. Examples of different address types which might be supported include e-mail, URL (uniform resource locator), IP multicase, IP unicast, E.164, AESA. Examples of different call control types include H.225.0, SDP, B-ISDN Q.2971, B-ISDN ATM-F UNI, N-ISDN Q.931, PSTN BTNR 315.

30 Table 1 below contains a complete listing of the address and call control types supported by one implementation of the invention. As indicated in the table, different integer codes are used to identify the different respective call control and address types.

TABLE 1

Class	Data
Client	familiarName : String distinguishedName : String domainName : String password : String clientCapabilities : List
ClientCapability	
Address	addressType : Integer = 0
IP	addressType : Integer = 1 version : String
Multicast	addressType : Integer = 2 version : String timeToLive : Integer
Unicast	addressType : Integer = 3 version : String
E164	addressType : Integer = 4 version : String
AESA	addressType : Integer = 5 version : String type : String
E-mail	AddressType : Integer = 7
URL	AddressType : Integer = 7 SummaryText : String
CallControl	callControlType : Integer = 0 version : String
H225	callControlType : Integer = 1 version : String
SDP	callControlType : Integer = 2 version : String
BISDN	callControlType : Integer = 3 version : String
ATM-FUNI3.1	callControlType : Integer = 4

	version : String
Q2931	callControlType : Integer = 5 version : String
Q2971	callControlType : Integer = 6 version : String
NISDN	callControlType : Integer = 7 version : String
Q931	callControlType : Integer = 8 version : String
PSTN	callControlType : Integer = 9 version : String
BTNR315	callControlType : Integer = 10 version : String
SMTP	callControlType : Integer = 11
HTTP	callControlType : Integer = 12

As indicated in the above table, the capabilities notified through the capability exchange mechanism may include a URL (uniform resource locator). The URL may be accessed by the terminal which initiated the capability set transfer in order to read details of further capabilities beyond those provided for in the table above. In this way the capability exchange protocol is made extensible to encompass new call protocols. The URL may also direct the terminal to resources, such as a Java applet, which may be downloaded by the terminal to facilitate its communication with the terminal which provided the URL. For example, the URL might relate to an HTTP page which includes a Java applet which displays a "call me" button. Then when the button is clicked on, a call is made from the terminal owning the URL to the other terminal.

Figures 3a and 3b illustrate the software architecture of a system embodying the invention. Each communications terminal runs a communications programme comprising a communications graphics user interface (GUI 31) on top of a communications application 32. The communications application 32 is supported by a number of resources 33 including a capability exchange module (CE) below this, a "listener module" continually monitors a predetermined socket

defined by the IP address of the communications terminal together with a 16-bit port number. The CE and listener modules may coexist with other resources such as the session invitation protocol (SIP) and H323 modules shown in Figure 3a. Capability set messages are passed between the UDP/TCP/IP layer and a capability exchange (CE) module. The listener module communicates transfer primitives to/from the CE module. In this preferred implementation, UDP (unreliable datagram protocol) is used rather than TCP (transport control protocol) for transporting the capability set data across the network. This avoids the overheads involved in setting up a TCP data stream. However this approach then requires that packets should be re-transmitted if not acknowledged after a predetermined period, to allow for the possibility of packet loss. Figure 3b shows message flows across different API's (application programmer's interfaces) as capability data is exchanged between two terminals. The transfer primitives shown in Figure 2 correspond to the API between the application layer (implemented using the Java language in this example) and the lower layers of the protocol stack.

Figures 4a and 4b show in further detail the sequence of message flows between terminals A and B in different implementations of the invention. In the sequence of Figure 4a, the exchange of capability data takes place prior to a session being established. Immediately after the exchange of capability data, a call is set-up using, e.g., the sequence of messages defined for an ISDN protocol such as H.320, in the case where the capability data indicated that both parties had this call control capability. In the second example, illustrated in Figure 4b, following the exchange of capability data, and prior to a call being set-up using, e.g., the H.323 call control protocol, Session Invitation Protocol (SIP) to establish the session.

Figures 5 and 6 are diagrams using the Rational ROSE (Rational Object-oriented Software Engineering) formalism to define software objects for implementing the embodiments discussed above. The structure shown may be compiled using the ROSE software tool which is available commercially from Rational Software Corp. of Santa Clara, California to generate, e.g., C++ code to form the basis of an implementation of the invention. As shown in Figure 6, a client object which is instantiated on each terminal includes clientcapabilityset and clientcapabilityreturn methods, which methods are inherited by a client capability

object. The properties of the client capability object are in turn inherited by address and call control objects as shown in Figure 5.

As an alternative to the direct transfer of client capability data, this may be effected via a directory. This method is described in the co-pending European application 97309810.6 filed 4 December 1997 (agent's reference A25527) the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference. Figure 7 illustrates an embodiment in which the exchange of data is mediated by a directory platform 7. The directory platform 7 is connected to the network by a link 8 which transports IP data between the network and the directory platform 7. The other components of the network are as previously described with respect to Figure 1.

In use, customers at user terminals 2,3 both register with a directory server which, in this example, runs on the directory platform 7. Subsequently, as will be further described below, when a customer at user terminal 2 wishes to contact the customer registered at user terminal 3, then a request is submitted to the directory server. This request is transmitted to the IP address of the directory platform 7. The request includes data, such as the customer name, which identifies the called customer. The directory server uses this data to select a corresponding user profile which was created when the customer registered with the directory server. From the selected user profile the directory server returns to the calling customer the network addresses and call control capabilities of the called customer. Using this information the calling customer sets up a call to the other customer. For example, the calling customer in this instance may choose to establish a connection to the ATM address (ATM2) using the ATM call control protocol (Q.2931).

Figure 8 shows the message flows between a local client, the directory platform (or "server") 7 and a remote client in this embodiment, as the local client registers its call control capability with the directory, and the remote client subsequently reads the call control capability data.

CLAIMS

1. A method of operating a communications systems comprising:
 - (a) exchanging between communication terminals call control capability data, which call control capability data identifies for each respective terminal a selected one or more of a plurality of different call control protocols and different network addresses and;
 - (b) setting up a call between the said communications terminals using call control protocols or network addresses identified in the said call control capability data.
2. A method according to claim 1, in which the step of exchanging call control capability data is carried out prior to initiating call set-up.
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, in which a first terminal initiates the exchange of call control capability data by transmitting the call control capability data for the first terminal to a second terminal and the second terminal returns an acknowledgement to the request, which acknowledgement includes call control capability data for the second terminal.
4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, including monitoring continuously at a communications terminal a communications port and carrying out the exchange of call control capability data whenever a request is received at the said port.
5. A method according to claim 4, in which the monitoring of the communications port continues after a call has been set up.
6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, including communicating as part of the said call control capability data a pointer to a source of further data identifying capabilities not provided for directly in the call control capability exchange protocol.

7. A method according to claim 6, in which the pointer is a uniform resource locator (URL).

8. A communications terminal including:

5 (a) means for exchanging call control capability data with other communications terminals, which call control capability data identifies for a respective terminal a selected one or more of a plurality of different call control protocols and different network addresses; and

(b) means for setting up a call between the said communications
10 terminal and the other communications terminal using a call control protocol or network address type identified in the call control capability data received from the said other communications terminal.

9. A communications network including a communication terminal according to
15 claim 8.

10. A communications network comprising a plurality of communication terminals, in which different ones of the plurality of communications terminals support different respective call control protocols, and in which each of the
20 communications terminals includes:

(a) means for exchanging call control capability data with other communications terminals, which call control capability data identifies for a respective terminal a selected one or more of the plurality of different call control protocols and different network addresses; and

25 (b) means for setting up a call between the said communications terminal and the other communications terminal using a call control protocol or network address type identified in the call control capability data received from the said other communications terminal.

30

Communications Network

10

Figure 1

Figure 2

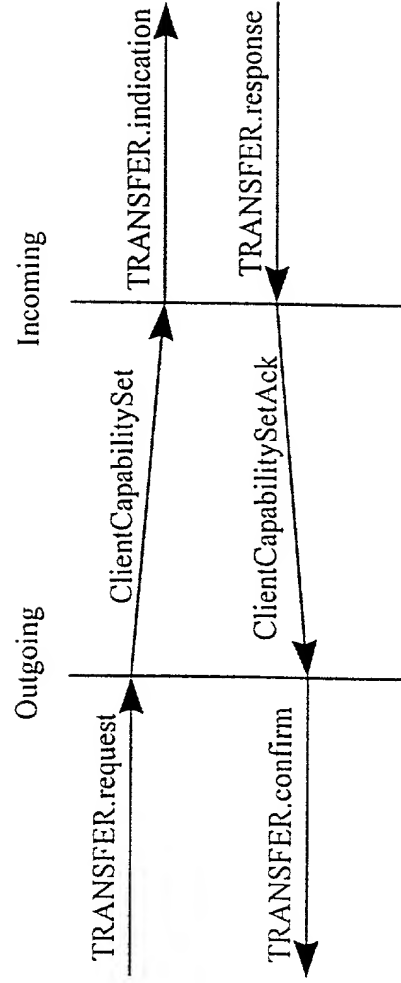


Figure 3a

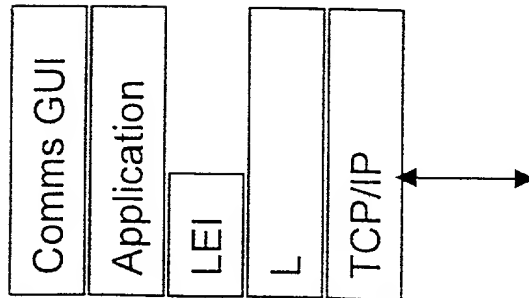


Figure 3b

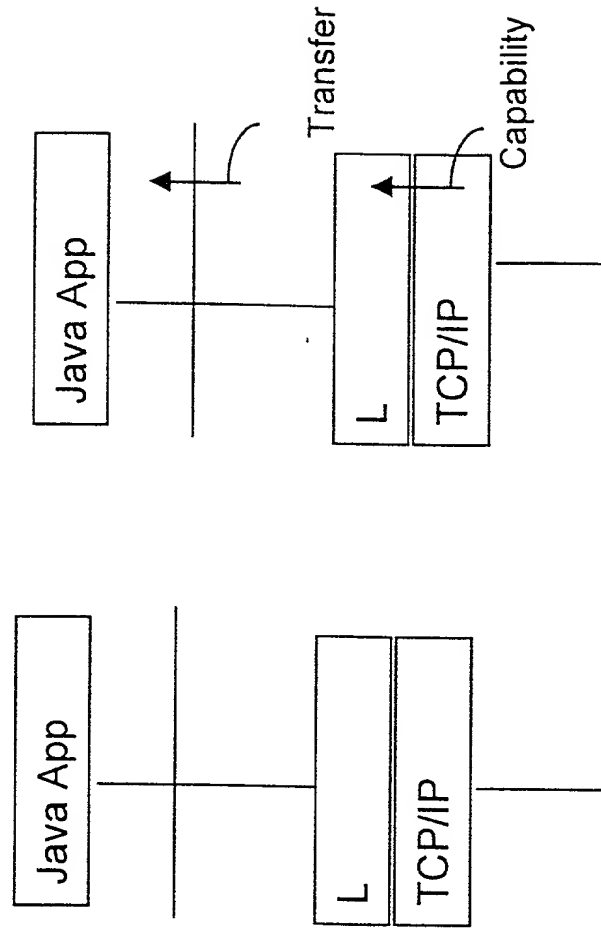
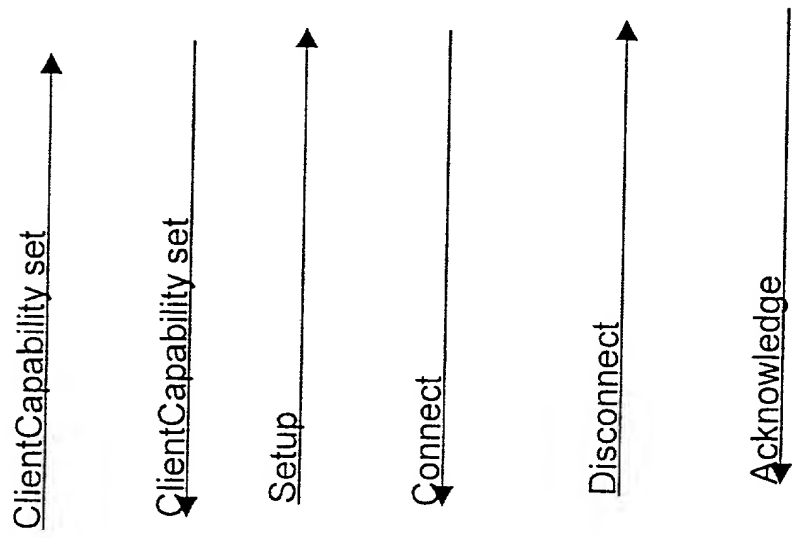
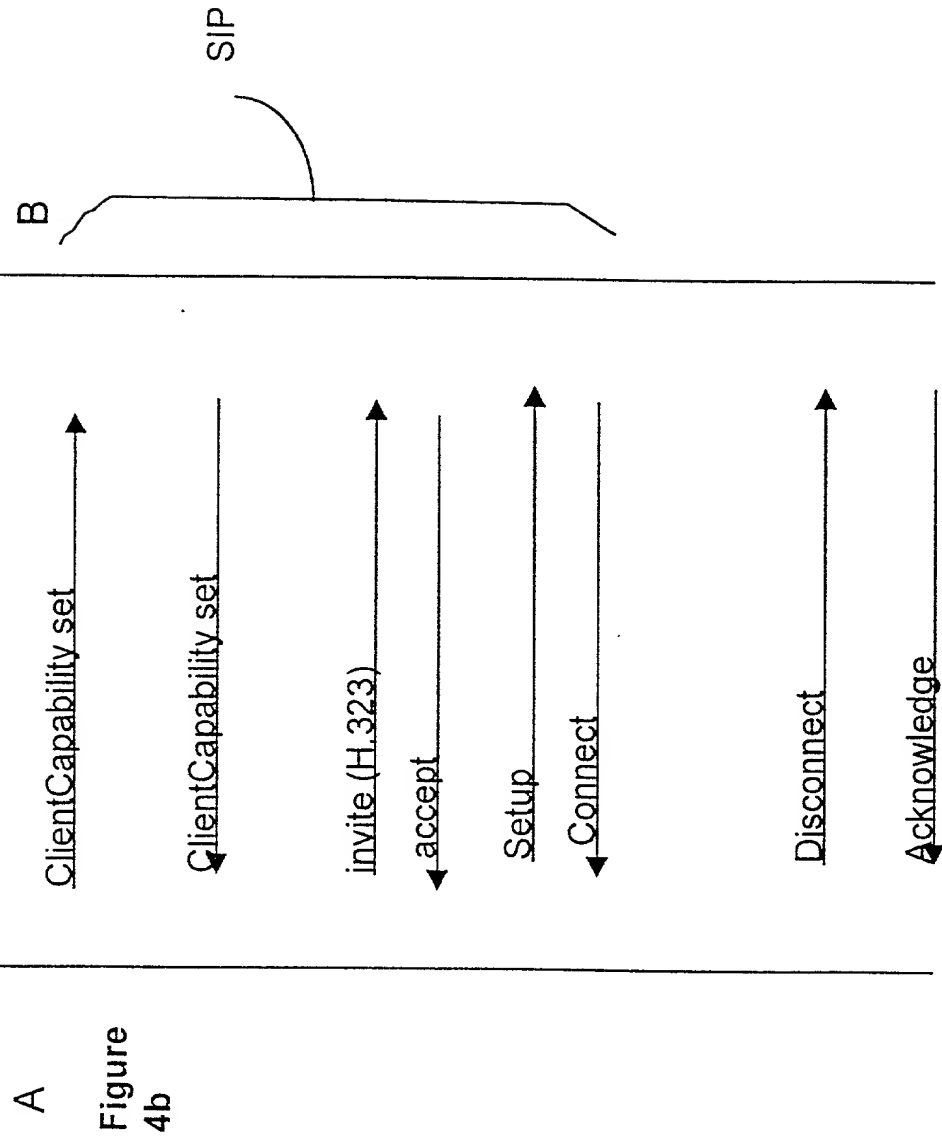


Figure 4a





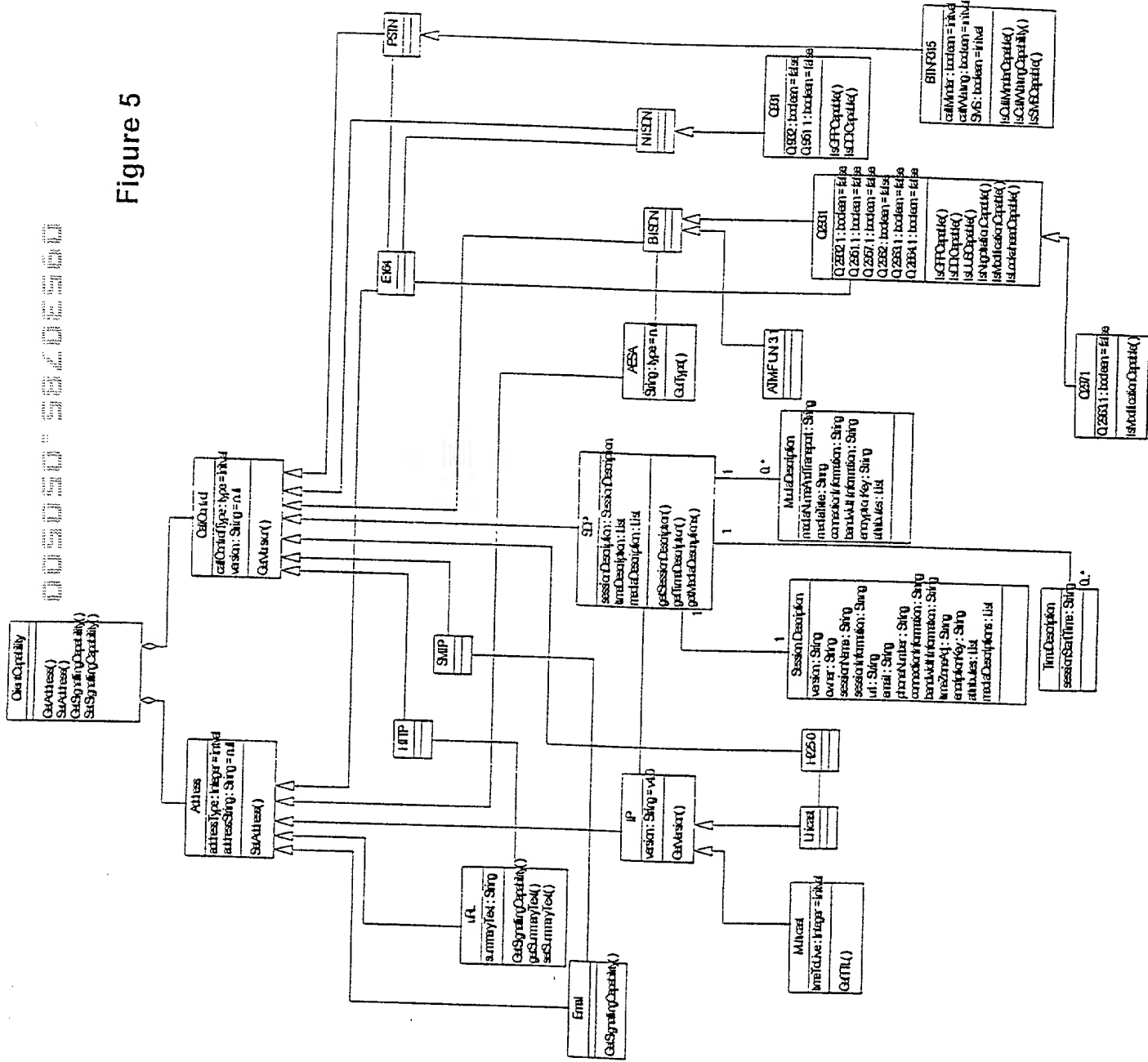
[illegible]

Figure 6

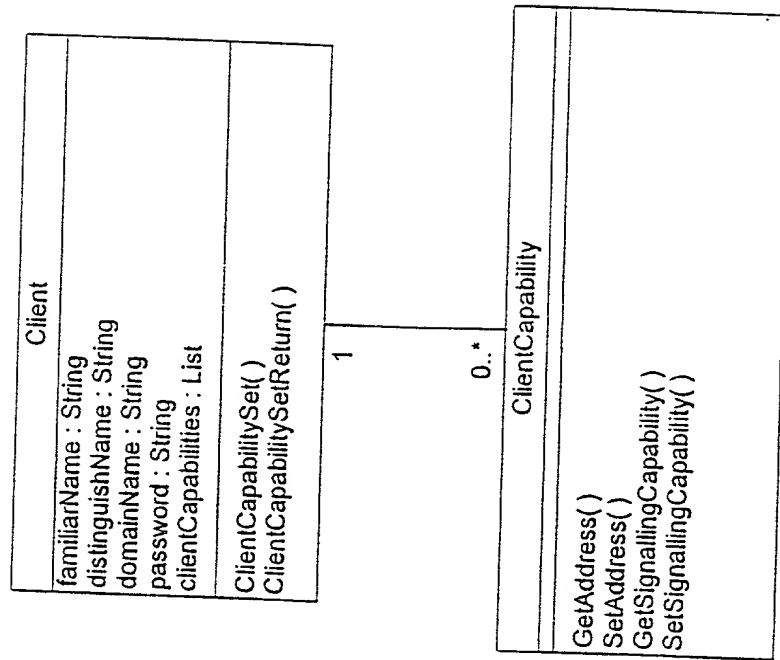
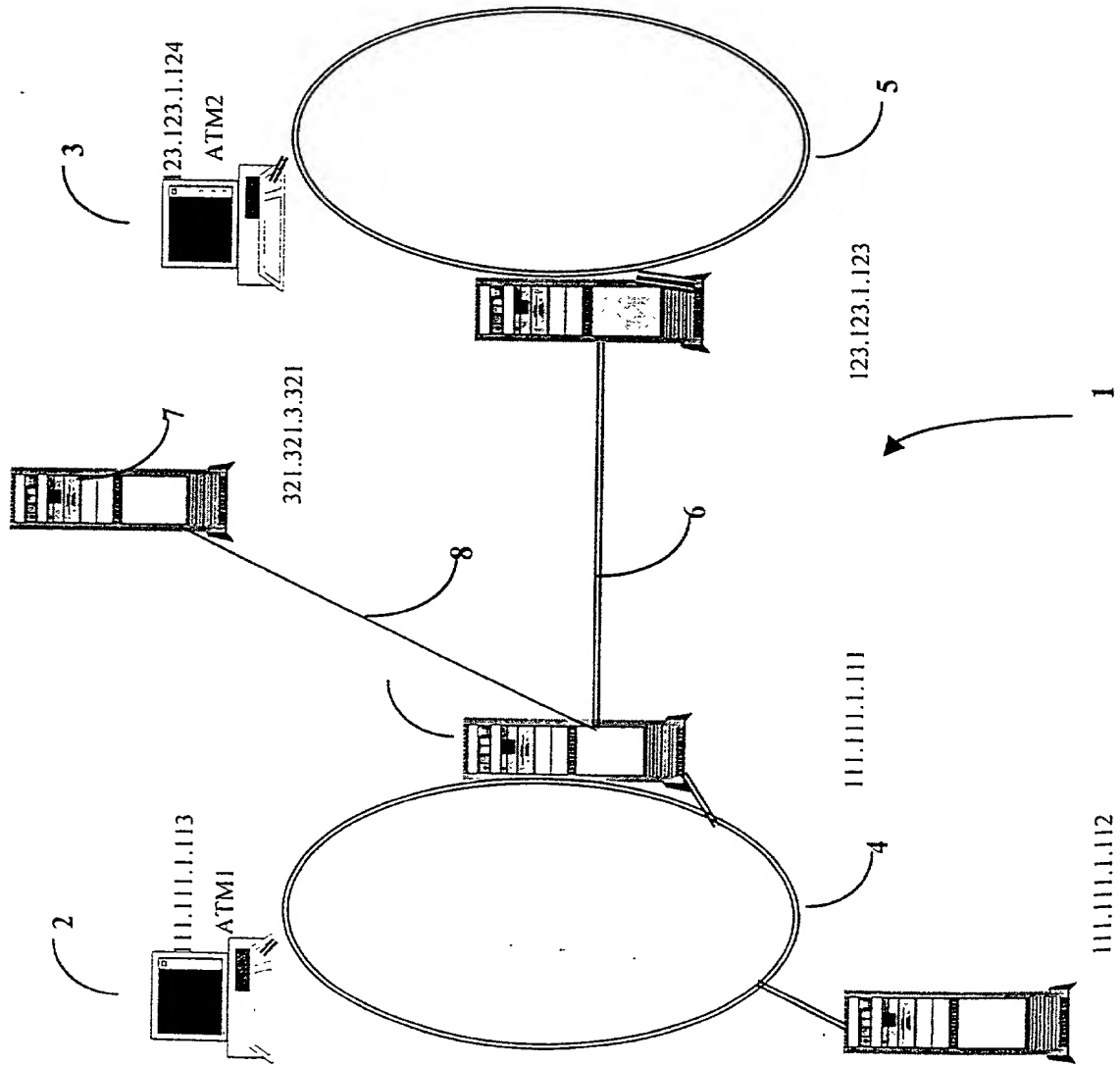


Figure 7



005050" 9240E960

Local Client i.e. PC
Workstation, STB : Client

Directory Server located within domain,
ISP or Public Network : Directory

Remote client, searching for
address and call control signalling

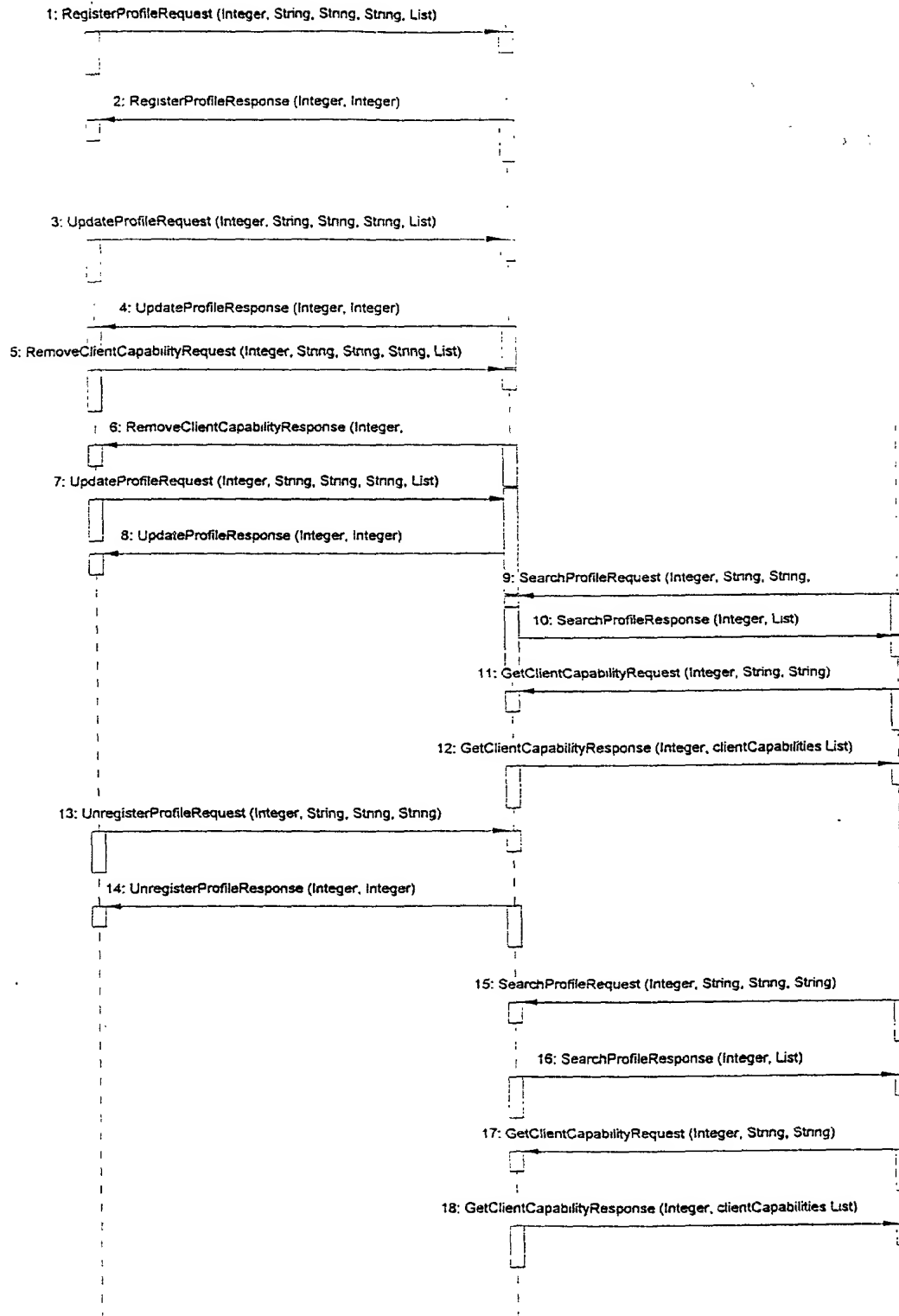


Figure 8

RULE 63 (37 C.F.R. 1.63)
DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
FOR PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that my residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name, and I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled: COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK the specification of which (check applicable box(es)):

☐ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on _____ as U.S. Application Serial No. _____

☒ was filed as PCT international application No. PCT/ GB98/03501 on 24 November 1998

and (if applicable to U.S. or PCT application) was amended on _____

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above. I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.56. I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119/365 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed or, if no priority is claimed, before the filing date of this application:

Prior Foreign Application(s):

Application Number	Country	Day/Month/Year Filed
97309810.6	EP	4 December 1997
98302452.2	EP	30 March 1998

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

Application Number	Day/Month/Year Filed

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. 120/365 of all prior United States and PCT international applications listed above or below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in such prior applications in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in 37 C.F.R. 1.56 which occurred between the filing date of the prior applications and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

Prior U.S./PCT Application(s):

Application Serial No.	Day/Month/Year Filed	Status: patented pending, abandoned
PCT/GB98/03501	24 November 1998	

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon. And I hereby appoint NIXON & VANDERHUYE P.C., 1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor, Arlington, VA 22201-4714, telephone number (703) 816-4000 (to whom all communications are to be directed), and the following attorneys thereof (of the same address) individually and collectively my attorneys to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith and with the resulting patent: Arthur R Crawford, 25327; Larry S. Nixon, 25640; Robert A. Vanderhuy, 27076; James T. Hosmer, 30184; Robert W. Faris, 31352; Richard G. Besha, 22770; Mark E. Nusbaum, 32348; Michael J. Keenan, 32106; Bryan H. Davidson, 30251; Stanley C. Spooner, 27393; Leonard C. Mitchard, 29009; Duane M. Byers, 33363; Paul J. Henon, 33626; Jeffry H. Nelson, 30481; John R. Lastova, 33149; H. Warren Burnam Jr., 29366; Thomas E. Byrne, 32205; Mary J. Wilson, 32955; J. Scott Davidson, 33489; Alan M. Kagen, 36178; William J. Griffith, 31260; Robert A. Molan, 29834

1. Inventor's Signature: [Signature] Date: 12/2/98
 Inventor: SIMON A BEDDUS BRITISH
 (first) MI (last) (citizenship)
 Residence: (city) IPSWICH, SUFFOLK (state/country) GREAT BRITAIN
 Post Office Address: 35 GROVE LANE, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK
 (Zip code) IP4 1NX

2. Inventor's Signature: [Signature] Date: 12/2/99
 Inventor: GARY L BRUCE BRITISH
 (first) MI (last) (citizenship)
 Residence: (city) WOODBIDGE, SUFFOLK (state/country) GREAT BRITAIN
 Post Office Address: 34 HAUGHGATE CLOSE, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK
 (Zip code) IP12 1LQ

3. Inventor's Signature: _____ Date: _____
 Inventor: _____
 (first) MI (last) (citizenship)
 Residence: (city) _____ (state/country) _____
 Post Office Address: _____
 (Zip code) _____